



November 10, 2020

Cardinal O'Malley Statement on “Report on the Holy See’s institutional knowledge and decision-making process related to former Cardinal Theodore Edgar McCarrick”

The “*Report on the Holy See’s institutional knowledge and decision-making process related to former Cardinal Theodore Edgar McCarrick*” is a painful and shameful account of how someone in McCarrick’s position rose to the role of bishop and cardinal and caused so much harm to so many. In word and deed, Pope Francis has followed through on his commitment to a comprehensive, transparent and thorough investigation.

Theodore McCarrick betrayed his sacred commitment to be a good and holy priest. Also, as a bishop and cardinal, he chose secrecy when transparency and accountability were required. His removal from the priesthood in early 2019 after being found guilty of the sexual abuse of a minor was a necessary sanction at the time. However, the release of the Vatican’s report today reveals the depth of the suspicion and the clericalism that allowed him to rise to the level of bishop and cardinal in the face of those allegations.

McCarrick’s victims who came forward in this investigation must be recognized for their courage. We offer them and all victims of clergy abuse our commitment to take responsibility for our failures and our continued resolve of responsibility, accountability and transparency. It is no longer enough for the Church to simply ask for forgiveness, to pledge transparency and apologize. All survivors, who have been courageous in coming forward, forcing the Church to face the crimes committed by clergy, religious and other personnel deserve our care, support and honesty. We have an obligation by all means possible to hold accountable those responsible for such reprehensible violations of human dignity and ensure that every effort is being made to assure the safety of our people.

The Church has made significant progress in responding to the clergy abuse crisis over the past two decades. While the work is ongoing, we must be vigilant at all times and there is much more to do.

In recent years, Pope Francis has addressed the global issues related to abuse. In February 2019, he hosted the Vatican Meeting on the Protection of Minors in the Church, and the subsequent release of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* established substantive measures to respond to the clergy sexual abuse crisis in the Church. Every diocese throughout the world is called to develop and implement a public, accessible and reliable system for reporting crimes of clergy sexual abuse and any cover-up of abuse. In the United States, these reporting systems are providing a means for any person to report allegations of abuse against a bishop or cardinal.

We will carefully review the findings of this report in the days ahead with the understanding that rebuilding trust and earning the confidence of the people of the Church and the communities we serve will be an ongoing process. We pray that with the help of God and one another we will not fail in our obligation.

To read the Vatican report click [here](#).